

Southeastern Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 13, 2025

Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Bridgestone Arena

Texas Longhorns

Coach Rodney Terry

Jordan Pope

Tre Johnson

Postgame Press Conference



trainer, Warren, and get a good night's rest. I feel like that's been helping me out.

I got a lot of gas in the tank. I wasn't too tired out there. Especially going double overtime. Haven't done that before. It's good to be playing with my brothers.

Q. Jordan, eight rebounds today against an A&M team that prides itself on rebounding. What is it like to play against a team like that?

JORDAN POPE: Yeah, I knew it was going to be a battle on the glass. Like coach said, they're a really good offensive rebounding team. Knowing our bigs were down there battling, the guards had to double down and help a little bit. I tried to do the best I could to make an impact on that part. I did a good job of doing that tonight.

Q. Obviously a big game for you. Articulate where you think you are with the NCAA tournament and if you think you're deserving of a bid.

TRE JOHNSON: I think we should be in by now, for sure. But if not, we can still put our hardhats on and come back and get another one tomorrow.

JORDAN POPE: I'm taking it day by day, game by game. It's do or die, regardless if we believe we're in or not. I'm trying to go out every single game. Hopefully we do get in, though.

THE MODERATOR: We'll excuse the student-athletes. We'll continue with questions for coach Terry.

Q. An A&M team that prides itself on its physicality, intensity, rebounding. Especially in a marathon like this, what did I take to beat them on that front?

RODNEY TERRY: It was going to take a group effort. We needed all five guys rebounding down for us tonight. When you go up against the No. 1 offensive rebounding team in the country, we can't have anybody leaking out.

The one guy that didn't rebound for them consistently is

Texas 94, Texas A&M 89 2OT

THE MODERATOR: We're ready to begin with Texas. We'll ask coach for some general thoughts on the game, then take questions.

RODNEY TERRY: Okay, good evening. What a game. Wow. Like to start off by giving Texas A&M a lot of respect in terms of the season they've had. Coach Williams is a class guy. Runs a great program. A lot of respect for their team this year, what they've been able to do in SEC play this season.

We knew it was going to be a hard-fought game, well-coached team. Best rebounding team in the country. 20 offensive rebounds tonight, 17 every game. We knew we had to come into this game with a physical mindset, value taking care of the basketball. I thought we did a nice job of that with six turnovers.

I'd like to give my guys a lot of props. They dug in, they dug deep. We've been in those situations in conference play, overtime play. They found a way to get it done tonight against an Elite Eight, Final Four caliber team tonight in a conference tournament. Just can't say how proud I am of them and their effort, how they responded to a quick turnaround tonight in getting this done.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Tre, yesterday I asked you about 38 minutes. Today you played 44. How much gas is left in the tank? What do you need to do to make sure you're recovered for tomorrow?

TRE JOHNSON: Biggest thing for me is staying with our



their point guard. He never comes to rebound. Our bigs are going to have their hands full on every shot that went up. Our wings were going to have their hands full. The one guy that had a chance to come down and rebound the basketball or get the 50/50 balls for us was our point guard. He had eight of them tonight. That's why Jordan Pope was such an instrumental part in helping us with the rebounding battle.

Q. When you play a double-overtime game, a couple guys are going to foul out. When you lose a couple of your key guys, how much is that changing down the stretch what you're able to do?

RODNEY TERRY: No, for sure. I mean, we had some adversity going down the stretch there. I thought our guys just stayed strongly connected. We have a number of give guys we trust to come in the game for us that play valuable minutes over the course of this season, that we trust can come in, still get the job done for us. They did it in a big way.

Julian Larry came in off the bench, was ready to play. Stepped in and did a nice job in overtime for us. Again, we've been in those situations this year. Not double overtime, but we've been in overtime situations this year or games down to the last second, situations that prepared us for these type of moments today.

Q. During the first overtime, second overtime, what was going through your mind?

RODNEY TERRY: Well, you're going against one of the all-time greats at Texas A&M, Wade Taylor. Wade Taylor is leaving that school as the all-time leading scorer. He's made so many big plays, won so many ballgames for Coach Williams. You're going against the best they have. He's a killer, he's tough. We had to dig down, find a way. We tried to keep those guys off the glass. We had to do our darnedest to try not to let him win the game for us. He almost did. He got to the foul line at a high clip and had 29 points.

Give my guys a lot of credit, man. We kept battling, hung tough, made big shots when we had to down the stretch.

Q. Address the tournament, what you think this win means for you guys and your case here.

RODNEY TERRY: I think as you finish the year, this time of year... We played in the best conference in the history of college basketball. Every night was an NCAA tournament game for us. I thought we learned a lot of lessons throughout the course of conference play.

Just like every team in this league, we battled some adversity through conference play, had guys in and out of the lineup, whatever it may have been, injuries here or there.

No guy more valuable to us than Chendall Weaver being out of the lineup for the whole conference play. He makes winning plays for us, he rebounds, defends. We have our full complement of guys now, full 10 complement of rotation players that we saw going into conference play. We have those guys right now.

I think so much about this time of year is about how you play, do you pass the eye test, or you're a team that can go into the tournament, make some noise, get things done. Do you have star power.

We have star power. We're playing well. We have our team that we anticipated having play for us right now. We're playing good basketball. I think all that matters down the stretch.

We're going to play a really good Final Four, Elite Eight caliber team tomorrow in Coach Barnes. Well-coached team, physical team. You have to be excited about playing this time of year.

I think we're playing as well as we played all season long and we're as healthy as we've been all season.

Q. Playing Tennessee, what means more? Is it that challenge or the fact that there's not as much scouting to do right now between y'all?

RODNEY TERRY: Well, I'll tell you what, they've had a couple players -- their team, they've had a great season. Anytime you go against Zeigler -- we went against him last year, going against Zeigler every year he's been in college. We're happy to see him graduate (smiling).

He's tough. He's Defensive Player of the Year two times in a row, he's First Team All-League player. He really kind of just set the table for all of his teammates. He's a willing passer, great defender. He's just a guy that's won a lot of games for Coach Barnes. You throw in a big-time shooter or two that they have over there, some physical posts, you have all the ingredients of a team that's had a great year in conference play.

Quick turnaround. We have to have a physical mindset tomorrow. We're going to play a great backcourt, great front court, physical team. We're going to have to be ready to play at a high level.

Q. I hear you talking about adversity all the time. I see

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

you working like crazy on the sidelines. Are you able to savor the moment and really have a little fun during all this?

RODNEY TERRY: Again, that's a great question. I think, again, people always say, Enjoy the journey. Whether it be the highs, the lows, everything in between, I think that's really important.

I think I've had a great group of guys to work with all year long that not one that have come to our facility and not been excited about working with. That's all you can ask.

God gives us our health every day and gives us a passion to do what we do. That's all you can ask for in life. Again, I thank Him for this day, and I thank Him for this opportunity every day.

Q. In a game like this, with you against Rick Barnes, do y'all even have to do a ton of scouting against each other or just because of the players involved? I would imagine schematically there's no secrets there.

RODNEY TERRY: I will probably say you're correct on that. I mean, we played four years in a row against one another. We understand what their identity is about. I think they understand what our identity is about.

It's going to get down to guys making plays, value taking care of the basketball. At the end of the day, guys making shots and playing with a physical mindset.

It's going to be a great game. They're a great team. They're a great program. They've had a lot of success in this league. We're excited about the opportunity and the challenge of competing against that level of team tomorrow afternoon.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, coach.

RODNEY TERRY: Thank you.

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